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Secretary Jewell Announces Milestone for Commercial Wind Energy Development in Federal Waters

*Interior Department Proposes Offshore Wind Lease Sale to Advance President's
Climate Action Plan, Identifies nearly 80,000 Acres off Maryland's Coast*

BALTIMORE, MD — As part of President Obama's [Climate Action Plan](#) to create American jobs, develop domestic clean energy sources and cut carbon pollution, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Director Tommy P. Beaudreau today joined Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley to announce the proposed notice of sale for nearly 80,000 acres offshore Maryland for commercial wind energy leasing.

BOEM identified the Maryland Wind Energy Area in consultation with members of its Maryland Intergovernmental Task Force, which includes Federal, State, tribal, and local government partners. The part of the wind energy area closest to shore is located about 10 nautical miles off the coast of Ocean City, MD. A map of the proposed area is available [here](#).

"Maryland is a leader when it comes to building a sustainable energy future, including the vast wind energy potential along the Atlantic," said Jewell. "As we work toward a competitive lease sale in Maryland, I want to thank Governor O'Malley and the task force, who have been instrumental in making sure that today's milestone reflects the input and commitment of industry, the local community and a broad range of stakeholders to advancing offshore wind energy development."

Based on analysis prepared for BOEM by the Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory, if fully developed, the Maryland Wind Energy Area could support between 850 to 1450 megawatts of commercial wind generation, enough electricity to power approximately 300,000 homes.

"Today's announcement brings our state one step closer to harnessing the tremendous potential of offshore wind energy off our shores and realizing Maryland's clean energy future," said Governor O'Malley. "The development of offshore wind will drive economic development in

Maryland, create high-quality, family-supporting jobs for Maryland residents and play a major role in reducing emissions and protecting the environment.”

“The wind energy potential offshore Maryland is significant,” said Beaudreau. “The key to offshore development is substantial stakeholder engagement to identify and address concerns early in the process. We have accomplished this through the Task Force, and we will continue to work very closely with all stakeholders, including the Coast Guard, maritime industry and others, as the project plans are developed and reviewed.”

Efforts to spur responsible development of offshore wind energy are part of a series of Obama Administration actions to increase renewable energy both offshore and onshore by improving coordination with state, local and federal partners. As part of a ‘Smart from the Start’ program for expediting commercial-scale wind energy on the federal Outer Continental Shelf, Interior identified Wind Energy Areas well suited for commercial development with marginal impacts to the environment and other important uses.

Today’s proposed notice of sale offshore Maryland builds upon two successful offshore wind energy actions that Interior has held this year. A September 4 auction of 112,799 acres offshore Virginia for wind energy development was provisionally won by Virginia Electric and Power Company, generating a high bid of \$1.6 million. Earlier this summer, the Department held its first successful offshore wind lease sale of 164,750 acres offshore Rhode Island and Massachusetts won by Deepwater Wind New England, LLC, generating \$3.8 million in high bids.

BOEM proposes to auction the wind energy area as two leases, a North Lease Area and a South Lease Area. The North Lease Area consists of 32,737 acres, and the South Lease Area consists of 46,970 acres. The sale, which will be held in the form of an online auction, is expected next year.

The proposed sale notice announced today for the Maryland wind energy area can be found in the *Federal Register* [here](#). The notice will trigger a 60-day public comment period ending February 18. Comments received or postmarked by that date will be made available to the public and considered before the publication of a Final Sale Notice. The Final Sale Notice will announce the time and date of the lease sale, which will be held no earlier than 30 days after the publication of the Final Sale Notice in the *Federal Register*.

The proposed sale notice also provides detailed information concerning:

- The areas available for leasing;
- Proposed lease provisions and conditions; and
- Auction details, including a lease form, criteria for evaluating competing bids, award procedures, appeal procedures, and lease execution.

To be eligible to participate in the lease sale, each bidder must have been notified by BOEM that it is legally, technically and financially qualified by the time the Final Sale Notice is published. Companies planning to submit a qualification package are strongly encouraged to submit as early as possible during the comment period to ensure adequate time for processing.

During the public comment period, BOEM will host a public seminar to describe the auction format and rules. The time and place of the seminar will be announced on the [BOEM website](#). BOEM has conducted an environmental assessment to analyze the potential effects associated with issuing leases within the Maryland Wind Energy Area. Before a decision regarding the construction of any proposed wind power facility, BOEM will conduct a comprehensive site-specific National Environmental Policy Act review, including opportunities for public comment.

For information on wind energy leasing offshore Maryland, including the Proposed Sale Notice, environmental assessment, and a map of the proposed lease area, go to <http://www.boem.gov/Maryland/>.

Public comments for the Maryland Proposed Sale Notice may be submitted at <http://www.regulations.gov> under Docket No. BOEM-2013-0002.

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